

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08 INR-10 LAB-04  
NSAE-00 SIL-01 DODE-00 PA-01 ICA-11 SP-02 /050 W  
-----049619 150148Z /73-61

R 140710Z JUN 78  
FM AMEMBASSY HELSINKI  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2826  
INFO AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN  
AMEMBASSY OSLO  
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

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E. O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: ELAB, PINR, FI  
SUBJ: WHITE COLLAR CONGRESS SHORT OF UNITY

1. SUMMARY. FINLAND'S PRINCIPAL WHITE COLLAR WORKERS  
CONFEDERATION (TVK) FAILED TO REACH CONSENSUS AT ITS  
TRIENNIAL CONGRESS, WHICH WAS CHARACTERIZED BY COMPETITION  
BETWEEN LEFTISTS AND NON-LEFTISTS, BETWEEN PUBLIC AND  
PRIVATE SECTOR EMPLOYEES, AND BETWEEN THOSE WHO WISH TO  
STRENGTHEN THE ORGANIZATION AS A BASE FOR COOPERATION WITH  
THE DOMINANT LABOR FEDERATION (SAK) AND THOSE WHO WISH TO  
CREATE A SUPER WHITE COLLAR GROUPING TO RIVAL THE SAK.  
THE TVK MAY HAVE DIFFICULTY HOLDING THESE CONTENDING FORCES  
WITHIN ITS WEAK STRUCTURE, DESPITE COMPROMISES AT THE  
CONGRESS. END SUMMARY.

2. THE TVK HELD ITS TWENTY-FIRST CONGRESS JUNE 5-7 AMID  
BUILDING PRESSURES FROM ITS 20 AFFILIATES TO BE MORE EFFECTIVE  
IN FURTHERING THE INTERESTS OF SALARIED WHITE COLLAR AND  
SERVICE WORKERS, WHO REPRESENT FINLAND'S FASTEST  
GROWING LABOR GROUP AND ALREADY CONSTITUTE OVER HALF  
OF THE WORK FORCE. THE TVK SHARES THIS CONSTITUENCY NOT  
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ONLY WITH SOME SAK UNIONS BUT ALSO WITH THE  
PROFESSIONAL FEDERATION (AKAVA) AND THE TECHNICAL  
FEDERATION (STTK), BOTH OF WHICH HAVE BENEFITED IN  
RECENT YEARS FROM DEFECTIONS FROM TVK. TO STEM THESE  
DEFECTIONS AND CONSOLIDATE THE POWER OF SALARIED  
EMPLOYEES, THE CONGRESS ATTEMPTED BOTH TO STRENGTHEN  
THE TVK'S LEADERSHIP AND TO DEVELOP A PROGRAM OF

COOPERATION WITH THE OTHER FEDERATIONS. THE DELEGATES JUST COULD NOT GET THEIR DISPARATE ACTS TOGETHER, HOWEVER, AND NEITHER ATTEMPT SUCCEEDED.

3. ON THE LEADERSHIP QUESTION, GENERAL AGREEMENT HAD PREVAILED ON REPLACING CHAIRMAN OSO LAAKSO, A MODERATE SOCIAL DEMOCRAT, WITH A PAIR OF CHAIRMEN WHO WOULD PROVIDE A DYNAMIC BALANCE IN THE ORGANIZATION BETWEEN POLITICAL LEFT AND NON-LEFT AND BETWEEN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR EMPLOYEES. HOWEVER, WHEN THE CONGRESS COULDN'T AGREE ON INDIVIDUAL CANDIDATES FROM THESE ALMOST EQUALLY DIVIDED GROUPS ITS VOTED TO SCRAP THE DUAL CHAIRMANSHIP PROPOSAL. INSTEAD IT RETAINED LAAKSO AS CHAIRMAN BY GIVING HIM A NARROW ELECTION VICTORY OVER AN INDEPENDENT. THE NEW 13-MEMBER EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, WHICH CONTAINS SEVEN NON-LEFTISTS, FIVE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS AND ONE COMMUNIST, ELECTED AS TVK VICE-CHAIRMEN VILJO TUOKKO (CONSERVATIVE) AND JORMA PALLASAHO (SOCIAL DEMOCRAT), TWO ACTIVITIES WHO ARE EXPECTED TO HAVE A CLOSE INFLUENCE ON LAAKSO, THOUGHT BY MANY TO BE RESPONSIBLE FOR TVK'S LOSS OF MEMBERSHIP.

4. ON THE ISSUE OF WHITE COLLAR SOLIDARITY, THE CONGRESS WAS FACED WITH A CHALLENGE FROM THE STTK'S MILITANT CHAIRMAN, JORMA REINI, WHO AT HIS OWN CONGRESS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IN MAY HAD ISSUED AN APPEAL FOR A MERGING OF WHITE COLLAR ORGANIZATIONS. THIS IDEA IS ATTRACTIVE TO PALLASAHO, WHO HEADS THE UNION OF INDUSTRIAL WHITE COLLAR EMPLOYEES, AS WELL AS TO SOME NON-LEFTIST MEMBERS WHO SEEK COUNTERBLANCE TO THE SAK. OTHERS VIEW THE CONCEPT AS DISRUPTIVE OF LABOR MOVEMENT COOPERATION, AND THEY RECEIVED SUPPORT FROM SAK CHAIRMAN OIVIO, WHO ADDRESSED BOTH STTK AND TVK CONGRESSES WITH A POINTED WARNING AGAINST DILUTING WORKER POWER INSTEAD OF BUILDING A UNITED FRONT AGAINST EMPLOYERS. THE CONGRESS PASSED A COMPROMISE RESOLUTION CALLING MERELY FOR THE TVK TO WORK FOR FURTHER COOPERATION WITH OTHER CONFEDERATION (INCLUDING THE SAK).

5. THE CONGRESS DID MANAGE TO APPROVE A LENGTHY EQUALITY PROGRAM, WHICH CALLS FOR AN END TO UNEQUAL TREATMENT OF THE SEXES IN WAGES, WORKING CONDITIONS AND OTHER ASPECTS OF EMPLOYMENT. THE PROGRAM CALLS FOR SPECIFIC MEASURES TO BE INCLUDED IN COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENTS AND COMMITS THE TVK, WHOSE MEMBERSHIP IS 75 PERCENT FEMALE, TO "PROMOTE A CHANGE OF

GENERAL ATTITUDES IN MASS MEDIA AND ADVERTISING"  
IN FAVOR OF SEXUAL EQUALITY.

6. COMMENT: IRONICALLY, GROWING TRADE UNION  
ACTIVISM IN THE TVK IS BEING MATCHED BY GROWING  
CONCERN THAT THE ORGANIZATION CANNOT SURVIVE THE  
CENTRIFUGAL FORCES OF ITS VARIOUS POLITICAL AND  
INTEREST GROUPS. THE CONGRESS TYPIFIED THE DILEMMA  
OF FINNISH WHITE COLLAR WORKERS, WHO CANNOT AGREE ON  
THE MEANS TO EXPLOIT FULLY THEIR GROWING POWER. FOR  
THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE, THE TVK WILL SURVIVE ON THE  
CAUTIOUS, SLIGHTLY LEFTWARD COURSE CHARTED BY THE  
CONGRESS, SATISFYING THOSE MEMBERS WHO FAVOR AN  
INCREASED COMMUNITY OF INTERESTS WITH THE SAK AND AN  
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AVOIDANCE OF THE DANGERS OF ADVENTURISM. IN THE  
LONGER RUN, HOWEVER, IT APPEARS THAT THE TVK WILL  
ALSO HAVE TO SATISFY THOSE MEMBERS WHO ADVOCATE A MORE  
ASSERTIVE, INDEPENDENT ORGANIZATION. RECONCILING  
THESE CONFLICTING TENDENCIES WITHIN THE TVK MAY  
PROVE TOO DIFFICULT A TASK.  
RIDGWAY

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 jan 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** PARTY UNITY, LABOR RELATIONS, LABOR UNIONS  
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**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 14 jun 1978  
**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
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**Disposition History:** n/a  
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**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
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**Review Markings:**  
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